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Dr. L U C A S's

SERMON

PREACHED

At St. LAWRENCE's Church on
Michaelmas-Day last,

Before the

Lord Mayor, &c.

Clarke Mayor,

Jovis *Septimo die* Octob' 1697.
Annoque Regis Willielmi
Tertij Angliæ, &c. Nono.

THIS Court doth desire
Dr. *Lucas* to print his Ser-
mon preach'd at *St. Lawrence's*
Church on *Michaelmas-Day* last
before the Lord Mayor, Alder-
men and Citizens of this City.

GOODFELLOW.

Reformation: Or the Duty of
Magistrate and People.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before
The RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
Lord Mayor

AND
A L D E R M E N
IN THE

Parish Church of *St. Lawrence-Jewry*, on the
Feast of *St. Michael*, 1697. at the Election
of the Lord Mayor for the Year Ensuing.

By *RICHARD LUCAS*, D. D.
Vicar of *St. Stephen's Coleman-street*.

London; Printed for *Sam. Smith*, and *Benj. Walford*, at the
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MEMORIAL

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD MAYOR

AND

A L D E R M E N

OF THE

City Council of St. Stephen's, on the
Part of St. Michael, 1877, in the Election
of the Lord Mayor for the Year Ending

By RICHARD EVANS, D.D.

Dean of St. Stephen's Cathedral, Bristol

Printed by J. W. Smith, 25, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4, and
J. W. Smith, 25, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4, 1877

PSALM CXIV. 16.

Who will rise up for me against the Evil-doers ? or who will stand up for me against the Workers of Iniquity ?

THIS *Psalms* is variously expounded. Some suppose that the *Church* does here complain of the Persecution of *Idolatrous Nations*, and implore the Aid of God and Man against them ; but whoever reflects on the 7th and 8th *Verses*, will easily see, that by *Evil-doers* and *Workers of Iniquity* in my Text, the *Psalmist* does not mean the *Heathen* and *Infidel*, but *Atheistical* and *Impious Israelites*. Others consider *David* in this *Psalms* as a *private Person*, and in distress ; and think that in the words of my Text he begs the Defence and Protection of *Man*, as in the beginning of the *Psalms* he had done that of *God* , against his implacable and too powerful *Enemies* : but whoever will look more closely into the design of this *Psalms*, will soon see, that *David* here is not acted by *Fear* but *Zeal* ; that 'tis

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not

not his *own Enemies*, but the *Enemies of God and Goodness* he sets himself against: Nor is it his *own Defence*, but the *Overtbrow of Wickedness* which he aims at. I think therefore we ought to look upon *David* here in a *publick Capacity*, as a *Prince or Magistrate*; and then as such he deplores the Increase and Confidence of the Wicked: and having fortify'd himself in God by Prayer, he resolves, in the words of my Text, to do the Duty of his Station, to imploy all the power God had given him for the Extirpation of Wickedness, and the Reformation of an impious People, and earnestly invites and calls in to his Assistance all that had either Heart or Ability for such a Work, as being well aware of the great difficulty of it. *Who will rise up for me against the Evil-doers? or who will stand up for me against the Workers of Iniquity?* This is the Sence I prefer, not only for the Reasons before alledg'd, but also because it best becomes the Zeal and Faith of *David*, best suits the Spirit and Genius of several other parallel *Psalms*, and seems plainly to me to have the Countenance of the *Targum* and *Septuagint*. In the words thus explain'd we have these three things:

1. The

1. *The deplorable State of Israel.* This is easily to be collected from the form and manner of *David's* expressing himself here, *Who will stand up for me? who will take my part?* As if he should have said, Such is the number and power of the Wicked, that how much soever my heart is set upon a Reformation, I can hardly hope to effect it, without the Concurrency and joint Endeavours of good Men. And yet alas! how little is the Assistance I can reasonably expect of this kind? How few are the sincere Friends of Goodness? How great and general is the Coldness and Indifference which possesses men in the things of God?

2. *The Duty of the Magistrate.* This is plainly imply'd here, and is, to curb and restrain Wickedness, and to promote a general Reformation.

3. *The Duty of all good People.* Which is, as far as in them lyes, to assist and encourage the Magistrate in this good Work. I begin with the *first* of these:

1. *The deplorable State of Israel.* The *Psal-*
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mist does not here reckon up all the Sins which then polluted the Land; but only observes to what *height* Wickedness was grown. Impudence and Atheism, or something equivalent to it, and Crimes of no common size now reign'd and rag'd every where. *Sin* was no longer the *work of darkness*: Transgressors were above the fear both of Shame and Laws: they had thrown off all Reverence for the *God of Jacob*, and hop'd in a little time to see all others do so too. Though they were such as were not to be endur'd in any Community, yet were they so far spread, and had so advanc'd themselves into places of Power and Profit, that they were in a Condition to oppress the Godly, and to project the utter Extirpation of Vertue, and the Establishment of Wickedness in its room, by their Influence and Authority. All this is plainly to be inferr'd from the Psalmist's Description of those times: *Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and stranger, and murder*

murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. And v. 20. Shall the Throne of Iniquity have fellowship with Thee, which frameth Mischief by a Law?

This was indeed a *miserable*, a *desperate* state of things : and yet we have reason to fear that our *own* is as bad ; nay, considering the Means and Motives we *have* enjoy'd, and still *do*, worse. Our Wickedness, both in *practice* and *principle*, is at last arriv'd at the utmost *maturity* it is capable of. It is not *lukewarmness* in *practice*, 'tis not too great a *latitude* in the *Faith*, 'tis not *Disputes* about things *indifferent* that we now complain of, but downright *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*. The utter Subversion of all Religion is now threatned by *Atheism* and *Deism*, by Clubs and Combinations of Wretches, who believe either *no God* at all, or none but *such* a one whose Being and Attributes *consist* well enough with the worst of *Vices*. Order and Decency, Peace and Unity, Church Discipline and Government, are things that we have *long ago* accusom'd our selves to contemn and slight : but *now* we are come to treat the *Gospel* it self

self as a *cunningly devised Fable*, and *Vertue* and a *publick Spirit* as things that none have an inward Esteem for but *Fools* and *Superstitious*. Now when these are our *Principles*, when these are openly abetted and industriously spread in Publick and Private, in Print and Conversation, to the reproach of *Christianity*, and the scandal and shame of *Magistracy* and *Government*, what *Morals* are we to expect amongst us? what, but just such as we find? We were *long ago* Lewd and Carnal, Factionous and Contentious, Admirers of the Pomp and Ostentation of Life. But these are the common and usual Vices of Prosperity in every Age: we have *now* advanc'd much further. We are False, and Base and Cowardly, Corrupt and Perfidious. There is no Truth, no Justice, no Integrity amongst us: much less any Love of our Country, or Zeal for any thing that is commendable or lovely. *Before* we were seduc'd by Prosperity against Conscience: but there was yet hope, because something of Conscience remain'd: but *now* alas! Conscience is look'd upon as a Notion fit only to awe and scare the Weak and Simple. *Before*, we were too far estrang'd from that *Purity* and

and *Peaceableness*, which are the inseparable Properties of *heavenly wisdom* : but now we are as far estrang'd from *common Honesty* and *Truth*, without which, I will not say *Religion*, but even *Human Society* and *Trade* cannot subsist. These are the glorious Fruits of *Atheism* and *Deism*, and I know not what late *Discoveries* and *Innovations* in *Religion* and *Politicks*. And all this is but the *natural* course of things ; for *ill Principles* do as naturally breed *Immorality*, as *Immorality* does *Ruine* ; according to that of the *Psalmist* , *The Fool hath said in his heart there is no God* ; and then it follows, *They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.* Psal. 14. 1.

This now is our *state* : how *dangerous*, how *deplorable* a one , no Man can be insensible, who is in any degree thoughtful and serious. And where is it now we are to seek for *redress* ? To whom are we to apply our selves for *Reformation* ? Shall we despair, Shall we quit the design of it, and, forbearing all attempts of our own , leave the Work wholly to God ? If so, we need not doubt but God will one day or other assert his *Truth*, and vindicate

vindicate his Honour ; but it will be in our Ruine, not Reformation. For when God has try'd us long under the richest means of Grace, the fructifying Influences of his Word , Sacraments, and Spirit, and we bring forth nothing but *Briars and Thorns*; when he has exercis'd us long under the various Discipline of Judgment and Mercy, and we bring forth nothing but Fraud and Falshood, Violence and Oppression; what are we to expect from God, but that he shou'd accomplish upon *us* all the *Woes* denounc'd against *Jerusalem* in the like case, *Isai. 5.* and sum'd up *v. 5, 6* ? And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard : I will take away the bedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up ; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it waste, it shall not be pruned, nor digged, but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the Clouds that they rain no rain upon it. I doubt not but you will be of opinion with me , that we ought to prevent this Sentence by some Endeavours of our own for Reformation. To whom then shall we address our selves ? To the Masters of Families ? 'Tis true, they can do much, and much
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one day will be requir'd of 'em. But alas ! when the *day* has been spent in *cares* and *drudgery*, the *evening* is commonly spent in *mirth*, or *wine*, or *worse* : so that little, I doubt, is to be expected from hence. Shall we then fix our hopes upon *Religious Societies*, confederated and enter'd into for this very purpose ? I am glad, I confess, to see a *Spirit of Religion* stirring and moving *any where* amongst us ; and I know not how far *this leaven* may go towards the fermenting the *whole lump* : But alas ! *They* do not possess all those *Advantages* which are necessary for so great a work. Shall we then expect Reformation from the *Clergy* ? God, I confess, has set them as *Shepherds* and *Watchmen* over his Flock, and it cannot be deny'd but we may and ought to do much *more* than we do ; I pray God make us sensible of the great *account* we are one day to render of our *Stewardship*. But alas ! you cannot be ignorant, that *this* is one of the crying Sins we *complain* of, that the great Endeavours of this Age are to render the *Ministry* of this Body of Men *useless* and *unserviceable* ; by malicious slanders and other ill methods to extinguish all Reverence for their Persons and Office ; and by pernicious

ous Errors to defeat the power and efficacy of their Doctrine: Nor can you be ignorant how far these have succeeded. From *whom* then are we to expect a Reformation? From the King? He indeed is invested with *power* enough, and *God has done great things* for him. I hope he is truly sensible of it, and has it upon his heart to make the best returns he can. Especially since our *Religion* and *Liberty*, without *this*, are far from being *secur'd*, our *Deliverance* far from being *compleated*: and whatever *honour* he has *himself* acquir'd either by *War*, or by *this Peace*, it will want its greatest Beauty and Perfection; nay, I fear, be utterly blasted, if it be not ripen'd and consummated by the *Glory* of a Reformation. But after all, will not he be ready justly to take up the words of the King of Israel in my Text, and in the sence I have given of them, *Who will rise up for me against the wicked?* &c. The Burthen is too great for one alone, were he great as *Moses* himself: therefore is the *Civil Power* communicated in lesser Streams and Branches, from the Root, from the *Fountain*, from the *Supream Magistrate*, to *Subordinate* ones. On *you* then is devolv'd a mighty part of this Duty. From *you* therefore, the
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Magistrates of this City, we are to expect strenuous and zealous Attempts for a *Reformation*. The eyes of all good Men may be reasonably upon you. The *station* you hold, the *power* you participate, lay great *Obligations* upon you, and give you great *Opportunities*. From you therefore *God*, the *King*, and the *People* may justly demand and expect very great Advances in the *work of Reformation*. All this will more fully appear from my *second General* ; which is,

II. The *Duty of the Magistrate*. That this is to curb and quell the Ungodly , and cut off wickedness from the Cities of our God, will be plain to any one that shall consider the End of Civil Power, and the Influence of Vertue. If we enquire *why* God has put the Sword into the hand of the Civil Magistrate, *why* the Supream, Universal Monarch of Heaven and Earth has communicated a Ray of his Authority to Man, *Scripture* and *Reason* will soon inform us. *St. Paul, Rom. 13.* after he has asserted the Origin of *Civil Power* to be from *God*, and from thence inferi'd the *Obligation* of Inferiors to *Obedience*, not only for *wrath*, but also for *Conscience sake* ; he does at large describe

the Office of a Magistrate, consisting in what I have laid down, v. 3, 4, 5. *St. Peter* advances the very same Doctrine, only a little more compendiously, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13, 14. *Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governours, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of Evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

If we consult *Reason*, this will soon tell us, that that is truly the great *End of Civil Power*, which when attain'd, the *Community* arrives at the greatest *happineß* it is capable of, and without which all other Advantages are either useless or pernicious. And this is certainly *Religion*: This is the Spring of all wise Counsels and Conduct, and of all handsome and worthy Actions. This inspires the *Magistrate* with Wisdom, Integrity and Zeal for publick Good. This produces Obedience in the *Subject* towards their Prince, and Charity towards one another. This begets and nourishes Sobriety and Courage in the *Souldier*, and Truth and Justice in the *Trader*. This is, in a word, the only solid Foundation of a People's strength and glory: for it gives us Peace and
Unity,

Unity, and Wealth at home, and Reputation abroad. But on the other hand, as *Righteousness exalts a Nation*, so *Sin is the reproach of any People*. This blasts all our Secular Advantages, and defeats all the hopes the most promising Circumstances can raise in us. *Wealth* without Religion does but invite *Invasions*, and render us a richer Prey. The strength and skill of *Arms* without Religion, naturally tends to *Tyranny* or *Civil Tumults* : or if a *Martial* Genius and Power be wisely or luckily *diverted* on *foreign Wars*, this in effect is but to *oppress our selves* in order to *infest others*. As to *Peace*, *there is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked*. This is as true with respect to the Peace of *Publick Societies*, as to the Calm and Tranquility of a *private Bosom*. Without Religion, *Selfishness & Sensuality*, *Lust*, *Passion & Fancy*, must be the predominant Principles in us ; and these are restless and humorous, dividing, contentious and weakening ones. They naturally *embroil* us with neighbouring Nations, or with one another, and make us at once *unfit for war*, and *incapable of peace*. In one word, were Religion exterminated, and Wickedness substituted in its room, without *any other* Evil or
Enemy

Enemy to attack us, we should unavoidably sink and perish under the weight and persecution of our own Vices.

And yet, after all this, I have made you but a very imperfect Representation of the different Influence of Religion and Wickedness. I must put you in mind further, that there is a God, a God who judgeth and ruleth the Earth; that the Sins of any Nation do certainly subject it to his wrath and displeasure, and their Vertues entitle it to his favour and protection. What the Prophet publisheth to Judah, is in effect the standing Rule of the Divine Government over all Nations. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land: But if you refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the Sword: for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Isai. i. 19, 20. And the following words are so applicable to us, that they may justly fill us with Melancholy apprehensions. How is the faithful City become an Harlot? It was full of Judgment, Righteousness lodged in it, but now Murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine is mixt with water. Thy Princes are rebellious and companions of Thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards. They judge
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not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, the mighty one of Israel, *Ah!* I will ease me of mine Adversaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies. Nor let us flatter our selves with *Security*, because God hath *sheath'd* the *Sword* by an undeserved *Peace*. Unless we repent and reform, he can soon *draw* it again, and turn the *point* upon our more *sensible* and *vital parts*: or if he don't do this, he wants no Artillery, no Instruments of Vengeance; he needs but restrain the Influences of Heaven, or let loose the Elements upon us, and we shall soon perish by Deluges or Conflagrations, by Earthquakes, Plagues, or Famines.

Thus I have plainly *prov'd* the *Proposition* laid down, that the great Business and Duty of the Civil Magistrate is, to maintain and advance Righteousness, and to cut off and extirpate Ungodliness. For I have shew'd that this is the great End for which God confers Power and Authority upon him: that Righteousness and Wickedness have necessarily a mighty Influence upon the Prosperity or Misery of every Community: and lastly, that the Favour of God is the necessary Consequence
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of the *one*, and his Displeasure of the *other* ; And *this alone* is at any time enough to make us a *happy* or *unhappy Nation*. The Result of all is briefly this, the *good of the Pepole* is the great Concern of the *Magistrate* ; and therefore it is *as plain*, that 'tis the *Duty* of the *Magistrate* to endeavour *at this time* a *Reformation*, as it is that the *good of the People* depends upon it. From this *Doctrin*e thus clear'd will follow these two or three plain *Inferences*.

1. Now that we see the *Duty* of the *Magistrate*, 'tis easie to infer *what kind of Men* are *qualify'd* to be *Magistrates*, namely such as *Je-thro* recommended to *Moses*, *Exod. 18.21*. *Able men, fearing God, men of truth, and hating covetousness*. *Able men* ; Men of Rank and Substance, Men of a great and just Reputation and Interest, founded on known and solid Vertues. *Fearing God*; this is the foundation of all Wisdom and Vertue ; 'Tis impossible that *such* shou'd be either Enemies to Wickedness, or hearty Friends to Righteousness, *whose Minds* are not possess'd with a due and awful sence of God. *Men of truth* ; i.e. of Uprightness and Integrity ; that cannot be wrapt by Popularity

larity or Ambition, nor influenced by Friends or Parties, by any selfish fears or hopes : but will readily pursue their Duty in defiance of all worldly Considerations to the contrary. *Hating Covetousness* ; Selfishness is a flat contradiction to a Publick Spirit, and 'tis impossible that the Sordid and Covetous shou'd ever be capable of any thing so great and lovely as Religion and Honour. *These are the Characters which fit Men for the Chair ; these are the Men whose Example will derive Force and Authority on their Zeal for Reformation.*

2. From hence 'tis plain that they who choose such Men for Magistrates as are not qualify'd for it , betray the trust which God and the Government have repos'd in 'em : That they are in effect Enemies to their Religion and their Country ; and the Grounds they proceed upon, whatever they be, can never be wise nor good. The great and excellent *Ends of God* can never be serv'd by *ill Men* ; by Men whose *Practices obstruct* that Vertue which their *Power should promote*, and are so far from being an *Ornament* to their Station, that they are a *Dis honour* to it, and serve only to bring Magistracy it self into contempt.

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3dly and lastly, Since *Magistrates* are the *Ministers of God*, and the great End of Government is to restrain Vice and propagate Vertue, 'tis plain that they must at the last day render an *account* of their Office to God, and stand or fall as they have answer'd or disappointed this Expectation of God. It will not *then* be consider'd what *expence* they have made, what *part* or *figure* they have maintain'd, or what *party* they adher'd to ; but how heartily they have fought the *good of the people* committed to their charge : which is, in other words, how zealously they have persecuted wickedness, and espous'd the interest of Religion. The *Psalmist* therefore puts *Magistrates* in mind, that God heedfully *superintends* and *observes* their *deportment*, in order to judge 'em. *God standeth in the Congregation of the mighty : he judgeth among the Gods.* Psal. 82. And by laying before 'em the vast importance of Magistracy to the *World*, for 'tis the support of it, he suggests to 'em how great, how dreadful a *punishment* must be justly due to negligence or corruption in it. *They know not, neither will they understand ; they walk on in darkness : all the foundations of the Earth are out of course,* v. 5. And at last, lest they should flatter

ter themselves that their power and greatness can shelter and skreen them from Vengeance; he puts 'em in mind that they are mortal, and can no more escape judgment than they can death: *I have said ye are Gods, and all of you are Children of the most High; but ye shall die like Men, and fall like one of the Princes,* v 6, 7. And as it is appointed for Rulers as well as private Men once to die, so consequently to appear in judgment. And what a dreadful account will he have to give at the last Audit, who has been selfish or sottish? who has prostituted his power to gratifie some vile Lust or Passion, and betray'd the honour and interest of Justice and Vertue to serve some By-end?

To prevent this sad issue of things, give me leave to lay before you the *Example* of an excellent Governour, which I would earnestly desire you to follow in proportion to your Endowments and Power; it is that of *David* in *Psal 101*. He there proposes to himself three things, and I do not doubt but he did steadily pursue 'em throughout his Reign. 1. He resolves upon the *practise* of the strictest vertue in his own person; without which he well knew he cou'd not expect the propitious Presence of

God with him, either to guide or bless him. *I will behave my self wisely in a perfect way ; O when wilt thou come unto me ? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes : I hate the work of them that turn aside, it shall not cleave to me , v.2,3.* Next he resolves to purge his Court of all wicked and ungodly Men, and to plant it with such as *fear God*: to cashier the peevish and ambitious, the treacherous and fraudulent, the factious and contentious ; and to receive into his friendship and service Men of Truth and Integrity , Lovers of Religion and their Country ; and therefore sure to be faithful to both. *A froward heart shall depart from me, I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off : him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me ; and so on.* Lastly he resolves to put the *Laws* against all notorious Offenders in vigorous execution And the truth is, the *Civil Laws* of *Moses* are full and severe enough against all wilful and scandalous Crimes, and needed not any *Arbitrary Power* to supply their defects: So
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that the *Pſalmiſt* might very well expreſs this his ſence in the manner he does; *I will early deſtroy all the wicked of the Land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the City of the Lord, v.8.* O bright example! O wiſe and holy Reſolutions! Happy will this Land be, when God ſhall vouchſafe to raiſe up ſuch a Spirit as this in our Prince, and in all that are put in Authority under him. Certainly all that have any ſerious thoughts about Religion and the Influence of it, muſt earneſtly deſire to ſee that day, and make it the daily ſubject of their importunate Prayers. Which minds me of my third and laſt Head.

III. The Duty of all good People, to ſerve and aſſiſt the Magiſtrate in his Endeavours for Reformation. Which is here call'd, *The ſtanding up with him againſt the workers of iniquity.* I need not ſurely prove this to be our Duty. We cannot ſave our own Souls without doing what God has put in our power towards the ſaving thoſe of others: without this we muſt not pretend to Religion. For what a ſtrange ſort of Religion is that which has neither Zeal for God, nor Charity for Man? and he can
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be suppos'd to have but very *little* of *either*, who will not contribute what he can to the maintenance and propagation of Righteousness, and the suppressing Wickedness. It often happens, and it is a deplorable face of things when it does so, that the great, and the rich, Men of place and power, are the Fautors and Abettors of Sin; not only doing ill themselves, but delighting in those that do so. It often happens that Vice has gain'd that Ascendant and Authority in a Nation (unhappy the Nation where it has!) that it defies, not only all the Exhortations and Denunciations of the *Pulpit*, but the Force and Majesty of *Laws* too. In this case, not *subordinate Magistrates* only, but even *Princes* themselves will need the counsel, the industry, the help and service of others; and shall *we* be accounted the Servants of God and Lovers of Vertue, if we express no concern or zeal for *either* upon such an occasion?

If it be said, we do not dispute our *Obligation* to do what we can in such a Cause as this is; but what is it that we *can* do? I answer, I do not doubt but that frequent *Opportunities* will offer themselves, when you may

may seasonably testify your good will to it. But besides *these*, there are some *general* ways of doing it, to which we are all equally tyed. Such are, for instance, a cheerful Obedience to the Magistrate; a fair and candid construction of his Conduct, a just honour and esteem for him on the account of what he does well, fervent and constant Prayers to God for a Blessing upon him, that he may be endow'd with a *Spirit of Wisdom and Counsel*, of Courage and Constancy, and may be ever under the protection and guidance of God. Nay, there is something *more* than all this that we *can* do; we may *reform our selves*, we may employ much care about *our Families*, we may countenance and encourage the *Publick Worship*, by our constant Attendance upon it, and an equal and reverent Deportment at it, and we may, in all *Conversations*, signify our *dislike* of every thing that has any tincture of *Impiety*. By this means we shall make the work of the *Magistrate* very easie, we shall strengthen his Hands, and confirm him in his just Resolutions; and we shall give check to the confidence of Sinners, and Sin will again sneak and hide it self in Dens and Darknes, when

when it meets with that open and honest opposition which it ought, from all that make profession of Christianity. Do you yet desire *more particular* Directions? consider by *what Arts ill Men* endeavour to propagate *Wickedness*, and from hence you will soon see how you are to *obviate* and *countermine* 'em. Are *they* industrious to advance ill Principles, and to subvert Primitive Christianity? *we* must contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and be industrious to keep it firm upon its first grounds. Are *they* for *cashiering* Churches, Liturgies, Priests, and Sacraments? It is even from hence plain, that 'tis the Interest of Religion that *we* shou'd pay a just regard to 'em. Do *they* combine to *blast* and *oppress* by Calumnies and ill Arts all good Men, and especially those who are more peculiarly engag'd in the Defence of Religion? *we* must encourage, vindicate, support, and honour such. Do *they* labour to *divide* and *embroil* us? *we* must sincerely follow after those things that make for peace. Finally, are *they* zealous to promote ill Men? *we* must be so to set up good ones. I will now sum up all, and conclude.

Our

Our *City* and *Nation* are miserably corrupted and debauch'd ; and while they are so, we can never promise our selves Prosperity or Safety. God has, 'tis true, at this time given us a *Peace* ; 'tis another *Trial*, 'tis another *Call* ; we, indeed, may make it a great and lasting *Blessing*. But alas ! unless a *Reformation* follow, *Peace* does but skin our Wounds : we bleed inwardly, and our very *Vitals* waste. What will it avail us to repair our *Losses*, if at the same time we pursue and multiply our *Sins* ? What will it signifie that we are deliver'd from the Fear of a *Mortal Enemy*, when , on this supposal, God must still have a *Controversie* with our *Land* ? A *Reformation* then you will all acknowledge necessary : and certainly, if you consider what Influence the Conduct and Morals of *this City* have upon the whole *Nation* ; and what an account both *Magistracy* and *People* have one day to give of their Ability to do good, you cannot but conclude that it ought to begin from *hence*, and to be strenuously prosecuted by the joynt Endeavours of the Magistrates, and others of this great, and if you will do your Duty, I doubt

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not but I shall soon be able to add, *flourishing and happy City.* Whether now you will bear, or whether you will forbear, I must leave that to you ; but Heaven and Earth will one time witness that I have this day sincerely put you in mind of your Duty. If you neglect it, certainly your Prosperity and Honour will be a very little, or a very short Blaze. For are they not the words of God in a much like case ? *Them that honour me , I will honour ; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed ?* 1 Sam. 2. 30. But alas ! suppose our Temporal Prosperity should be prolong'd ? what then ? Is there not a day, a terrible day coming, when Parties and Passions shall be no more, when the strength of Sides and Factions shall be scatter'd and dispers'd for ever, when all the little Politicks and Subtilties of Man shall be miserably exploded and expos'd, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day ? Then shall Electors and Elected appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and give an account of your Trust ; and then shall ye all receive according to what you have done in the Body, whether it be good or evil. Ah ! Day joyful to the Righteous, but dismal to the Wicked !

Wicked ! I will add one short Remark, and I have done. The Language of the Text seems to me to be wholly Metaphorical, consisting of Military Terms : this indeed suggests to us that Reformation is a Work wherein you must expect to be encounter'd with great Opposition and many Difficulties. But let no Man's heart fail him for this : The Cause is the Lord's ; and whoever engages in it, fights under the banner of God, enjoys the Prayers of good Men, the Ministry of Angels, and the Aid of the Holy Spirit ; and may with a holy Assurance use the words, and expect the Success which Moses did when the Ark set forth : Arise, O God, and let thine Enemies be scatter'd ; Let them also that hate thee flee before thee.

F I N I S.

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